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Other Land Use Actions

NOTICE OF CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING ON A PROPOSED ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH AN AFFORDABLE HOUSING IMPACT MITIGATION PROGRAM FOR COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The Seattle City Council is considering a proposed ordinance that would add a new Chapter 23.58B to the Land Use Code and make other amendments. Chapter 23.58B would establish a framework for an Affordable Housing Impact Mitigation Program (Program) to partially mitigate the impacts of commercial development on the need for affordable housing. The proposed ordinance would:

- Establish the Council's intent related to (1) increased development capacity and other methods to implement the Program; (2) modifications to payment and performance requirements established by the Program; and (3) establishment of a process to modify development standards such that property owners can take advantage of increased development capacity;
- Establish exemptions from the Program;
- Define the relationship of the Program to the existing Incentive Zoning Program (Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) Chapter 23.58A and certain sections of Chapter 23.49);
- Establish procedures for permitting;
- Establish procedures for seeking modifications to Program requirements; and
- Set Initial payment amounts and alternative performance requirements for mitigation.

The proposed ordinance would also amend the State Environmental Policy Act ordinance, SMC Section 25.05.675 to adopt environmental policies to help mitigate the need for affordable housing caused by commercial development, and amend Section 23.76.006 to address procedures for certain Program decisions.

The hearing will also allow testimony to determine whether local housing market conditions are such in Seattle as to require that the City establish programs to provide for development of affordable housing for not only those earning no higher than 50 percent of Area Median Income (AMI) (\$35,850 annually for a two-person household), but also those earning no higher than 80 percent of AMI (\$57,360 annually for a two-person household). The proposed ordinance provides income limits of 60 percent of AMI (\$43,020 annually for a two-person household) for rental housing and income limits of 80 percent of AMI for owner-occupied housing.

Based upon public testimony and Council deliberations, the ordinance ultimately adopted may be different than the amendments summarized above.

PUBLIC HEARING

The City Council's Select Committee on Housing Affordability will hold a public hearing to take comments on the proposal on Wednesday September 30th at 5:30 p.m. The hearing will be held in the:

City Council Chambers
2nd floor, Seattle City Hall
600 Fourth Avenue

For more information on the time of the hearing, please check the Committee agenda a few days prior to the meeting at www.seattle.gov/council/com_assign.htm. The entrances to City Hall are located on the west side of Fifth Avenue and the east side of Fourth Avenue, between James and Cherry Streets. For those who wish to testify, a sign-up sheet will be available outside the Council Chamber one-half hour before the public hearing.

Questions concerning the public hearing may be directed to Esther Handy in the offices of Councilmember Mike O'Brien, at 684-8800, esther.handy@seattle.gov. Print and communications access is provided on prior request. Please contact Esther Handy at 684-8800 as soon as possible to request accommodations for a disability.

Written Comments

For those unable to attend the public hearing, written comments may be sent to:

Councilmember Mike O'Brien
Legislative Department
600 Fourth Avenue, Floor 2
PO Box 34025
Seattle, WA 98124-4025
or by email to mike.obrien@seattle.gov

Written comments should be received by Wednesday, September 30th at 12 p.m.

INFORMATION AVAILABLE

Electronic copies of the proposed ordinance are available here:

www.seattle.gov/council/committees/HousingAffordability/. Paper copies of the proposal are available from the DPD Public Resource Center, 700 5th Avenue, Suite 2000 in the Seattle Municipal Tower, 684-8467. The Public Resource Center is open 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Monday, Wednesday and Friday and 10:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursday.

Questions regarding the proposal or requests for electronic copies may be directed to Laura Hewitt Walker at the Department of Planning and Development (DPD), 684-0429, laura.hewitt@seattle.gov; Brennon Staley at DPD, 684-4625, brennon.staley@seattle.gov; Emily Alvarado at the Office of Housing, 684.3727, emily.alvarado@seattle.gov; or Ketil Freeman at the Council Central Staff, 684-8178, ketil.freeman@seattle.gov.